



Office of Environmental Health E-Newsletter

Electronic version available at: www.azdhs.gov/phs/oeh/rs/ehnl.htm

July 2005

Hepatitis A Refresher/ (Booster)

Following a recent Hepatitis A infection scare in Yuma County earlier last month, it may be a good time to revisit some basics about viral Hepatitis A foodborne illnesses.

Hepatitis A is grouped as a viral hepatide with Hepatitis B and C. Although Hepatitis A can be transmitted as a bloodborne pathogen similar to Hepatitis B and C transmission, its predominate mode of transmission is by the fecal-oral route.

Following ingestion of Hepatitis A virus contaminated water or food, the incubation period is usually between 20 and 50 days. Symptoms include fever, nausea, abdominal pain, and jaundice. The disease runs its course in about one to two weeks although some severe cases can persist for up to one year.

Prevention is the key to limiting the occurrence and spread of the disease. First, and most importantly, good hygiene in the form of adequate hand washing particularly for food handlers,

daycare personnel, and institutional workers is essential.

Considering the enormous role the fecal-oral route plays in the transmission of Hepatitis A virus, it is extremely important for a sanitarian to verify proper handwashing techniques for food service workers during the inspection process. Also, if the food service establishment has a variance for bare hand contact of ready to eat foods, the sanitarian needs to verify that the establishment and employees are addressing all provisions of the variance.

In addition, Arizona public health officials should be aware of the State's communicable disease rule. Specifically, for Hepatitis A, control measures in the rule include:

A. Case control measures:

1. A local health agency shall exclude a Hepatitis A case from working as a food handler or attending a child care establishment during the first 14 days of illness or for seven days after onset of jaundice.
2. A local health agency shall conduct an epidemiologic investigation of each reported Hepatitis A case or suspect case. For each Hepatitis A case, a local health agency shall complete and submit to

ADHS within 10 working days after completing an epidemiologic investigation Exhibit III-G (see rule) or an electronic equivalent to Exhibit III-G provided by ADHS.

B. Contact control measures: A local health agency shall:

1. Exclude a Hepatitis A contact with symptoms of Hepatitis A from working as a food handler during the first 14 days of illness or for seven days after onset of jaundice;
2. For 45 days after exposure, provide follow-up to a food handler who is a contact of a Hepatitis A case during the infectious period; and
3. Evaluate the level of risk of transmission from each contact's exposure to a Hepatitis A case and, if indicated, provide or arrange for each contact to receive prophylaxis and immunization.

The entire communicable disease rule can be viewed at: www.azsos.gov/public_services/TITLE_09/9-06.htm

The best protection from Hepatitis A infection is by getting the Hepatitis A vaccine. Immune globulin is available for more immediate and short-term protection.

Arizona Registered Sanitarians Have Only Six Months Left...

As most of you are aware, there are some significant changes to the Arizona registered sanitarian rule that will impact the renewal process starting in 2006.

It is very important that all Arizona registered sanitarians be mindful of the new rule and the potential serious consequences if the provisions in the rule are not followed.

Starting with the upcoming 2006 renewal process each registered sanitarian must obtain 12 hours of Arizona Sanitarian's Council approved continuing education in each calendar year for renewal of registration. So for the 2006 renewal, a registered sanitarian will be required to obtain 12 hours of continuing education during calendar year 2005.

A registered sanitarian who has been registered for less than 12 months is not required to obtain council approved continuing education for renewal of registration.

The rules allows for only two types of deferral. A registered sanitarian may submit, with the renewal application, a request to defer the 12 hours of continuing education for renewal of registration that includes written documentation of the registered sanitarian's illness or active military duty for at least six months of the preceding 12 months that prevented the registered sanitarian from

completing the continuing education requirement.

If a registered sanitarian fails to obtain the 12 hours of continuing education during the preceding calendar year and does not have an approved deferral, the sanitarian's registration will lapse. Consequently, the sanitarian will need to reinstate the lapsed registration by submitting a new application, meeting all the requirements in the sanitarian rule, passing the examination, and submitting all application and examination fees.

Essentially, if you let your registration lapse, you will be required to start from scratch in the registration process. Please do not let this happen and help ADHS get the word out!

The Arizona Sanitarian's Council will mail the 2006 renewal application to each registered sanitarian in November 2005.

For specific questions regarding the renewal process or other registration matters, please contact Don Herrington, Arizona Sanitarian's Council Chair, at herrind@azdhs.gov or (602) 364-3142.

FDA Pacific Retail Food Seminar

The 2005 Annual Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Pacific Region Retail Food Seminar is scheduled for August 9 - 11, 2005 in Irvine, California. FDA and the California Department of

Health Services (CDHS) are sponsoring this year's seminar.

The seminar will include state program managers' reports, food safety innovations, and industry advances. The registration fee for the seminar is \$35.00. Please contact Susan Strong at CDHS for registration and lodging information. Susan can be reached at sstrong1@dhs.ca.gov or (916) 650-6617.

Biosecurity and School Foodservices

School staff needs to develop an understanding and awareness of food biosecurity in order to protect children from intentional contamination of foods being stored, prepared and served in schools. The USDA developed a biosecurity checklist for School Foodservice Programs available at: schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/Safety/biosecurity.pdf

A meeting is scheduled next month with the Arizona Department of Education to present the ADHS Food Biosecurity Program and encourage the formation of a school foodservice biosecurity management team. If you are interested in additional information, please contact the ADHS food biosecurity specialist, Brigitte Dufour at (602) 364-3130.

--Brigitte Dufour

West Nile Virus Update



Mosquito Surveillance

As of June 22, 2005, a total of 34 mosquito pools have tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV) in Arizona in 2005 by either PCR performed at the Arizona State Health Laboratory and/or by RAMP assay performed at Maricopa County Vector Control and Yuma County Pest Abatement District. Fourteen of these mosquito pools have tested positive for WNV since the beginning of June. WNV positive pools have been reported in seven counties, including Cochise (1), Graham (1), Maricopa (15), Pima (1), Pinal (3), Yavapai (1), and Yuma (12).

Equine Cases

Only two equine cases have been reported as of June 22, 2005, both in Maricopa County. One horse was from the Mesa area and one was from Buckeye.

Sentinel Chickens

Two chickens have seroconverted to WNV in 2005, including one in Maricopa County in the Laveen area and one in Pima County in East Tucson. The WNV positive chicken in Tucson was a recent seroconversion. Five sentinel chickens within two flocks in

Yuma County tested positive for Western Equine Encephalitis.

As of June 22, 2005, no human cases of arboviral disease have been confirmed and no dead birds have tested positive for WNV.

For additional information on WNV, please contact the ADHS Vector-Borne Disease Program at (602) 364-4562 or visit their website at www.westnileaz.com.

--Craig Levy, Vector-Borne & Zoonotic Diseases, Manager, ADHS

School Rule Change Adds Animal Standards Section

The proposed rulemaking package for Public School Sanitation rules will be filed with the Secretary of State in early July. The oral proceeding will be scheduled for late August.

According to State law, the rules must "prescribe minimum standards for sanitary conditions...in any public school."

The proposed changes will make the rules consistent with current statute. The most notable change is the addition of an animal standards section. The new section provides minimum sanitary standards for keeping animals in a school. It also prohibits certain types of animals and adds provisions to demonstrate rabies vaccination.

The draft rules can be viewed at: www.azdhs.gov/diro/admin_rules/draft.htm

Bob Gomez is the ADHS contact for this rule change. He can be reached at (602) 364-3140 or gomezr@azdhs.gov.

Newsletter comments or questions can be directed to Bob Gomez, Program Manager, ADHS, at (602) 364-3140 or gomezr@azdhs.gov.
